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SPORTS

Winchester boys basketball team begins new campaign with resounding win over Wilmington

JOE MCCONNELL | SPORTS EDITOR

December 20, 2024 . 6:00 AM — 4 min read

Alex Casey, left, and Craig O'Callaghan are this year's Winchester High School boys basketball captains. COURTESY PHOTOS/SARAH GIRLOTTI

The Winchester High School boys basketball team wrapped up th
season last year with a 12-8 record. They were seeded 38th in the

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power rankings, before going on to beat Arlington (14-7, 27th seed) — a team that defeated the Red & Black twice during the regular season — in a preliminary round game, 47-41. They then lost to BC High (15-8, sixth seed) in the Round of 32, 81-45.

Turning the page to this season, coach John Fleming welcomed 65 to tryouts on Dec. 2. With only 11 days to get ready for the season, Fleming had scheduled four scrimmages against North Andover, Concord-Carlisle, Shawsheen Tech and Stoneham to ramp up the process.

But by the time the season opened up last week versus visiting Wilmington, the coach was very happy with his team's progress, not to mention the overall program, as well.

"We are really excited about each of our three levels," Fleming said. "We first scrimmaged North Andover. [The Knights have] a terrific program, and so it was a good first look at this year's team. We came out and played really well early on, which was great to see."

The Winchester boys then went to Concord-Carlisle to face the Patriots in the second scheduled scrimmage.

"Concord-Carlisle is also well-coached. They were physical against us, and also set a good pace, while we played well offensively by sharing the ball and knocking down a bunch of shots," said Fleming.

The Red & Black followed up that road scrimmage with a tri-scrimmage at home versus Shawsheen and Stoneham.

"Shawsheen has a 6-9 big forward, and Stoneham also has some size, which was good for us to try to navigate against," summed up Fleming afterwards. "We still have a long way to go, but I'm pleased wher right now."

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Red & Black dominates opener

The scrimmages must have worked, because the Red & Black was able to open up the home season with a dominating performance against Middlesex League rival Wilmington. They were able to win the game going away, 72-30 on Dec. 13.

Alex Casey and Craig O'Callaghan are this year's varsity captains.

"Alex emerged as a starter last year, and will be one of our go-to guys on offense throughout this season. Last year, on defense, we often put Alex on the opponent's best offensive player. It will be more of the same this season," said Fleming. "Craig is our most vocal player. He's a consistent voice on the defensive end of the floor, and is always trying to connect with his teammates."

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The team has plenty of offensive options, according to Fleming.

"We have guys who can attack, shoot, and play the post, and we will continue to work on our spacing and timing throughout the season," added Fleming. "Jack (Charchaflian) was a league all-star as a freshman, and will now take on the primary ball-handling role full-time.

"Defensively, we have some size and length that should give opponents fits," he continued. "Carson Sarpong has a chance to be the league's top shot blocker. We look at each day as an opportunity to get better, and, if we keep on pushing ourselves, we think we can be in the mix for a league title and a good state tournament run."

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Despite the late start to the season, Fleming continues to be impressed with Evan Wilson's ability to knock down his shots.

Joe McCarron, who holds the program's single game scoring record (39), is back again helping out, along with Bobby Bellotti, who is also a WHS alumnus and a former Connecticut College player. He's now beginning his coaching career, and both he and McCarron will help Fleming out on the varsity sidelines.

Mike Borgasano returns as the JV coach, while continuing in his role as a varsity assistant. Football coach Wally Dembowski is in charge of the freshman team. WHS teachers Ben Lawhorn and Tom Lewis are his assistants. Michael Tavilla, another WHS alumnus, coaches the middle school Recreation Department team.

After beating aforementioned Wilmington, the Red & Black will go up against Arlington at Waltham High on Friday, Dec. 20, beginning at 6:30 p.m. They will be at Acton-Boxborough to start Christmas Week on Monday afternoon (Dec. 23) at 12:30 p.m.

The fourth annual Bob Bigelow Holiday Classic will close out the week on Dec. 28 and 29. The Winchester boys will take on Medford in the first game on Saturday at 11 a.m., followed by Masconomet going up against Greater Lawrence Tech at 12:30 p.m. The consolation and championship games will be played on Sunday at 2 and 3:30 p.m., respectively.

Fleming sizes up the Middlesex League this year with the respect it deserves.

"The Middlesex League is always tough," he said. "Every night is a challenge, and we expect nothing different this year. The league's Liberty Division, where we play, should be very competitive as each tean

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some key players, and we think our group can compete with any of them for the league title."

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Winchester boys basketball heads to Bridgewater-Raynham for Sweet 16 game after beating Lexington in postseason opener

It was the third meeting this year between Middlesex League boys basketball rivals Lexington (16-5, 11th seed) and Winchester (17-4, 22nd seed). They split the first two during the regular season, thus making this Round of 32 postseason matchup the impromptu rubber game of this year's series, with the

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Winchester wrestling enjoys Top 10 finish at state divisional meet; senior captains move on to All-States

After the Winchester High qualified wrestlers competed hard over two days last weekend (Feb. 20, 21) in the State Division 1 Meet at North Andover High School, Mother Nature gave them a break to rest and recuperate with Monday's blizzard that resulted in two days off from school. There

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Winchester boys hockey advances to the Sweet 16 after beating Wachusett in the tournament opener

The Winchester High boys hockey team (12-9-2), the 17th seed, edged the 16th-seeded Wachusett Regional Mountaineers (18-2-1), 5-4 in a Round of 32 Division 1 state tournament game at Westborough's Northstar Ice Arena on Feb. 25. The Red & Black will now take on top seed Catholic Memorial (18-2-1)

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With postseason starting Friday night, WHS boys hoop seniors English, Sarpong, Burbine join Middlesex League elite

The Winchester High boys basketball team, the 22nd seed, will take on Middlesex League rival Lexington, the 11th seed, to begin the Division 1 state tournament in the Round of 32 on Friday night, Feb. 27, starting at 6 p.m. These teams are so evenly matched, beginning with the

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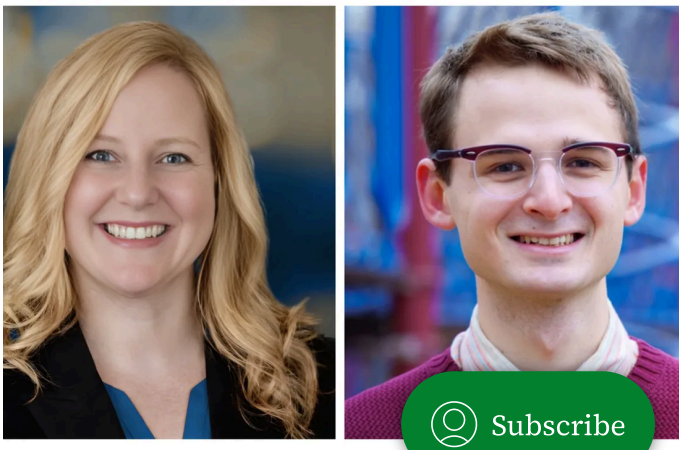

NEWS

Celebrate Women's History Month with Girls Leading Change

The following was submitted by the Network for Social Justice: To mark Women's History Month and International Women's Day in 2026, the Network for Social Justice is collaborating with club leaders from Winchester High School and members of the Community Health team from La Colaborativa in Chelsea and

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Winchester School Committee candidates bring contrasting backgrounds to Thursday forum

Two candidates for Winchester's School Committee will face voters at a forum as the district navigates a new literacy curriculum, budget pressures and questions about student mental health. Heather von Mering and John Bellaire are competing for an open seat on the School Committee, which oversees a budget von

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March 4, 2026

FEATURES

'Chicago: Teen Edition' dances onto the Winchester High School stage

By Talia Ho | Correspondent Fame. Fortune. And all that jazz. This spring, Winchester High School presents "Chicago: Teen Edition," a bold musical that explores celebrity culture, media manipulation, and the cost of ambition. This iconic production is set in the 1920s. Performances will take place on March 13 and 14

SPECIAL TO THE NEWS

March 4, 2026

EVENTS

Ripley Chapel in Winchester presents 'Syldason: You Are Welcome Here'

The following was submitted by the Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church: On Friday, March 13, beginning at 7:30 p.m., live in-person and live streamed from the stunning Ripley Chapel at First Congregational Church, Winchester, 21 Church St., join in with Syldason, a duo concert featuring Sylvie Zakarian,

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